

"FIG. 4.

Once the patient is positioned within the gap, the patient bed 33 and the spaced-apart structures 32 are substantially immobilized, as is conventional, to prevent movement with respect to the lower magnet pole during magnetic resonance imaging. For example, a locking pin can be passed through the rails or rollers 32 and into the base portion 25."

and insert therefor --FIG. 4--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 18 to replace "fully extended away from the NMR polarizing magnet" on line 13 with --wholly outside of the gap-- and replace "and being constrained to prevent movement with respect to said lower magnet pole" on lines 17-18 with --and fixed with respect to the upper and lower magnet poles-- as follows:

Sub P(1)
18. In an MRI system including an NMR polarizing magnet having opposed upper and lower horizontal poles defining a MRI image volume within a gap between the poles that is open about at least three sides, the improvement comprising:

5 a movable patient transport supporting a horizontal patient bed and passing across said lower magnet pole while interjecting the patient bed into said gap so as to permit substantially adjacent patient access
10 along a side of the patient while the patient is positioned within the MRI image volume,

said patient transport having a first position wholly outside of the gap, and at said first position the

movable patient transport being enabled to allow movement
15 of the bed, and
E1 said patient transport having a second position
in the gap and fixed with respect to the upper and lower
magnet poles during an MRI imaging procedure.

Please amend claim 20 to replace "positioned
completely away from" on line 5 with --wholly outside of--
as follows:

Sub E2
20. A method for positioning a patient for MRI
using an NMR polarizing magnet with a C-shaped cross-
section, said method comprising:
placing said patient on a movable bed while said
5 bed is wholly outside of the NMR polarizing magnet;
moving said bed [above a floor] towards said NMR
E2 polarizing magnet and into juxta-position with an open gap
of the C-shaped magnet; and,
moving said bed across a lower pole face of the
10 magnet and into said open gap thus leaving unobstructed
adjacent access to the patient along an entire patient
body side while the patient is disposed within said open
gap.

Please amend claim 21 to replace "displaced
fully away from" on lines 15 and 16 with --wholly outside
of-- as follows:

Sub E3
21. In an MRI system including an NMR
polarizing magnet having opposed upper and lower
horizontal poles defining an MRI image volume within a gap
between the poles that is open on at least three sides,
5 the improvement comprising:

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E3

a movable patient transport supporting a horizontal patient bed, the movable patient support passing across said lower pole while moving the patient bed into an imaging position in the gap, thereby permitting substantially adjacent patient access along a side of the patient while the patient transport is positioned in the imaging position and the patient is positioned within the MRI image volume, and

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the patient bed moving between the imaging position and a displaced position wholly outside of the upper and lower poles.

Please amend claim 22 to replace "completely displaced from" on line 6 with --wholly outside of-- as follows:

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E4

22. A method for positioning a patient for MRI using an NMR polarizing magnet having opposed upper and lower horizontal poles defining an MRI image volume within an open gap between the poles that is open on at least three sides, the method comprising:

at a location wholly outside of the upper and lower horizontal poles, placing said patient on a movable bed;

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moving said bed into juxta-position with said open gap; and

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continuing to move said bed into said open gap while moving said bed over a face of the lower pole, thus leaving unobstructed adjacent access to the patient along an entire patient body side while the patient is disposed in said open gap.